

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-18. (canceled).

19. (currently amended) A microemulsion not containing any active pharmaceutical agent, said microemulsion comprising 5 to 35 wt% of a non-polar animal or vegetable oil, 10 to 55 wt% of at least one polar solvent selected from the group consisting of water, a buffer, an alcohol, and mixtures thereof, and at least one surfactant selected from a polysorbate, a poloxamer and a fatty acid polyoxyethylene, wherein the microemulsion further comprises 20-50 wt% of a monoacyl glycerol.

20. (currently amended) A microemulsion suitable for entrapping airborne particles, consisting of 5 to 35 wt% of a non-polar animal or vegetable oil, 10 to 55 wt% of at least one polar solvent selected from the group consisting of water, a buffer, an alcohol, and mixtures thereof, and at ~~least~~least one surfactant selected from the group consisting of a polysorbate, a poloxamer and a fatty acid polyoxyethylene, wherein the microemulsion further comprises 20-50 wt% of a monoacyl glycerol.

21. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or claim 20 wherein said mono-acyl glyceride is glyceryl monooleate, glyceryl monolinoleate or glyceryl monolinenoleate.

22. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in any of claim 19 or 20, wherein said non-polar animal or vegetable oil comprises sesame oil.

23. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20, wherein at least one component of said polar solvent has a pH exceeding pH 5.5.

24. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20, wherein said polar solvent comprises propylene glycol and/or polyethylene glycol and/or saline solution.

25. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20, wherein said surfactant has a hydrophilic-hydrophobic balance exceeding 7.

26. (previously presented) The microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20 wherein said polysorbate is polysorbate 80.

27. (currently amended) A composition suitable for administration to peripheral membrane linings of the nose, the eyes, the ears, the pharynx, and/or the larynx of a mammal, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ the composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of a microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20.

28. (currently amended) A mouth or nasal spray device containing the ~~microemulsion~~ microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20.

29. (previously presented) A filter device comprising the microemulsion as claimed in claim 19 or 20.

30. (previously presented) A mouth or nasal spray device containing the composition as claimed in claim 27.

31. (previously presented) A method for preventing allergic rhinitis in a subject, caused directly or indirectly by airborne particles, said method comprising contacting at least one surface of said subject with a composition as claimed in claim 26.

32. (previously presented) A method of preventing airborne particles reaching exterior mucosal membranes of a mammal, said method comprising the step of administering to said exterior mucosal membranes of said mammal a prophylactically effective amount of a composition as claimed claim 27.

33. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said composition is administered buccally or intranasally.